Indiana K-6 Reading Framework

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

	Reading Goals	Instruction	Assessment	Leadership	Professional Development	Commitment
Schools					⭐	

Guiding Principles:

☑ Leadership teams commit to and allocate time for educators to learn reading programs and improve instruction through individual and collaborative planning and reflection.

☑ Assessment data and the achievement of reading goals drive professional development.

☑ Professional development includes training and job-embedded support and is coordinated, ongoing, and multidimensional.

☑ Professional development is differentiated and targeted to meet needs and staff responsibilities.

☑ High quality professional development fosters a deep understanding of reading priorities and leads to effective implementation of proven practices.

☑ The Reading Plan should spell out the expected content, timing, and structure of professional development.

All professionals learn their crafts through training and practice. Ongoing professional development equips teachers with the knowledge and skills to effectively provide the instruction students need to become proficient readers. Effective professional development addresses both the theoretical knowledge of reading instruction as well as specific instructional delivery methods to ensure students are learning. The most valuable professional development results from careful analysis of student data to identify staff learning needs. The National Staff Development Council recommends "at least 25% of an educator's work time be devoted to learning and collaboration with colleagues."[1] Professional development does not only include workshops and conferences; in fact, high quality professional development is job-embedded, includes collaboration and study, grade level meetings, time to plan and reflect, data analysis sessions, and ongoing observations and coaching by experts and mentors to enable teachers to transfer new knowledge and skills to the classroom.[2] This section of the framework focuses on four principles of effective, high quality professional development.

**Leadership Allocates Committed Time to Plan, Reflect Upon,
and Improve Reading Instruction**

Professional development involves much more than handing teachers reading manuals. As Louisa Moats notes, "Teaching Reading IS Rocket Science," and to develop the expertise necessary to ensure all students become proficient readers, teachers need sufficient, focused time to learn.[3] Not only is teaching reading complex, but the diverse needs and backgrounds of students make teaching even more challenging. Many professional development sources recommend ways to increase time for focused professional development, with the National Staff Development Council website[4] a useful starting place. Teachers need and deserve time before instruction to prepare and time after instruction to

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[1] National Staff Development Council, 2001 (retrieved from http://www.nsdc.org/standards/resources.cfm)
[2] National Staff Development Council, 2009 (retrieved from http://www.nsdc.org/standfor/definition.cfm)
[3] Moats, 1999
[4] National Staff Development Council http://www.learningforward.org/index.cfm

determine effectiveness and refine their practices.[5] This type of planning and reflection time should be both individual and in collaboration with colleagues.

Regular grade level or team meetings provide a productive opportunity for collaborative lesson planning, data study and problem-solving for students who are not responding to core instruction. Schools can allocate portions of grade level meetings for professional development focused on enhancing program routines, practicing and getting feedback from colleagues on delivery, and planning future lessons. For example, a team may work together to practice a new routine for teaching students to decode multisyllabic words before the routine comes up in the core program. They may also collaborate on developing lists of important vocabulary words for upcoming units and creating student-friendly definitions to be used or researching brain-compatible strategies for teaching vocabulary.

Time for professional development can also come in the form of collaborating with an expert teacher or an administrator following regular, brief observations. Joyce and Showers found compelling evidence that classroom coaching is a vital component of effective professional development, bringing use and transfer rates of new skills and knowledge up to 95%.[6] Observation sessions can be as brief as five to ten minutes and still be useful. Longer observations and instructional feedback, including lesson modeling and co-teaching, are especially beneficial to novice teachers, teachers new to a particular curriculum, and for teachers who are not seeing sufficient student performance improvement. An expert teacher or administrator can each serve in a coaching capacity to observe student responses as teachers are teaching. This information, coupled with student data from program assessments or formative measures can be utilized to plan assistance for the teacher. Subsequent to the observation, a post conference provides the vehicle to identify necessary steps the teacher may take to improve instructional delivery and student mastery. For example, a coach may observe that a number of students are not responding correctly to blending lessons. The coach

[5] Gersten, Chard, & Baker, 2000
[6] Joyce & Showers, 2002; Neufeld & Roper, 2003; Sturtevant, 2003

can then work with the teacher to model instruction, making sure students receive corrective feedback for inaccurate responses, or can practice with the teacher and then watch again as the teacher provides added modeling and guided practice. By assisting the teacher to analyze student responses and data, the coach will enable the teacher to become more reflective and be able to identify lesson components that need additional practice, require preteaching, or warrant reteaching.

In addition to professional developed focused on reading instruction, professional development can also target specific vocabulary and reading comprehension strategies to assist teachers in delivering social studies and science content. Grade level teams can collaborate to develop content-specific vocabulary instruction, and then coaches can focus on the extent to which students are learning to understand and use the vocabulary. This could include assisting teachers to engage students actively in processing the meanings of the words, using the words in speaking or using the words in writing tasks. Coaches and other observers can assist teachers through deep discussion about content taught and model strategies for students and teachers. In these ways professional development time centers on both reading instruction and content-specific instructional strategies.

Assessment Data and Reading Goals Drive Professional Development

For professional development to be meaningful, it should be driven by data and focused on ensuring students meet important reading goals.[7] If most students are meeting reading goals or are on track to meet formative and summative goals, professional development should focus on meeting the needs of the students who are not making progress or are below grade level. If student are not making progress, professional development needs to focus more generally on ways to improve instruction. In the former case, the need for instructional adjustments is limited and professional development can focus on ways to ensure continuous growth for all students, ways to differentiate for those not making progress, and

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[7] National Association for State Boards of Education (NASBE), 2006

strategies to increase overall outcomes incrementally each year. In the second case, when many students are not meeting formative or summative goals, it is necessary to analyze the data carefully to determine what adjustments are needed and then provide professional development in the form of training and/or coaching to assist teachers in order to make those adjustments. For example, school data analysis may show that only 60% of students are meeting formative oral reading fluency targets in grades 3-6. This scenario indicates that grade-level teams need to carefully analyze data from other sources, such as prior grades, and plan together a potential school-wide approach. This would then be followed by professional development to support teachers with the approach.

Targeting Practices and Programs

Professional development for elementary school teachers should target both research-based practices and specific programs. For the reading block, professional development should focus on strong and faithful implementation of core, supplemental, and intervention programs adopted by the school, as well as how to provide explicit and effective reading instruction.[8] Too often teachers receive professional development on new programs that is limited; for example, they may only receive training from the publisher, focusing on initial program organization. Publisher professional development on reading programs and materials should be enhanced and deepened to ensure teachers develop a high level of expertise.[9]

In-depth professional development should focus on the specific mechanics of the reading programs. This should include modeling and practice of the program routines, how to provide corrective feedback, and practice delivering program

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components to ensure all students master the critical concepts and skills. Professional development should also address how to use the program

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[8] Lehr & Osborn, 2005; Torgesen, Houston, Rissman, & Kosanovich, 2007
[9] Gersten and Dimino, 2001

assessments, how to structure small group instruction, and how to integrate the program ancillary materials effectively. The SEA, LEA, and the school all play a vital role in ensuring organized and systematic professional development leads to strong student outcomes.

Starting in third grade, students must apply reading skills to content-area textbooks as well as to academic content from the Internet and other sources. Informational texts present new challenges to both students and teachers. Supportive professional development should address how to identify critical information students need to learn, how best to teach that content, and how to ensure students are learning it.[10] Reading a social studies or science text requires understanding how those texts are structured and how to get information from them. This means professional development should show teachers how to recognize different organizational structures for students (for example, cause and effect or chronological order), how to use charts and graphs to gain information, and how best to identify and teach the subject-specific terminology students need to learn in order to understand what they read. In addition to classroom teachers, specialists, coaches, and administrators will profit from professional development that focuses on both reading instruction and how to read and understand content area texts.

Professional Development Is Coordinated, Ongoing, and Multidimensional

Studies conducted by Joyce and Showers, as well as by subsequent researchers, show that for instructional change to become institutionalized, teachers need ongoing consultation, feedback, and support.[11] Perfecting teaching techniques requires practice and judicious review. One-time workshops or conferences, without structured and concerted follow-up, will not result in sustained instructional improvements.[12] Instead, effective professional development provides educators with repeated exposure to new knowledge and skills, along with regular

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[10] Heller & Greenleaf, 2007; Torgesent et al., 2007
[11] Garet et. Al., 2001; Gersten and Dimino, 2001
[12] Lehr & Osborn, 2005

opportunities to practice and apply their learning in the classroom.[13] Professional development can take the following forms:

- ☑ State or regional institutes
- ☑ District-wide professional development
- ☑ School-based professional development, coaching, and support
- ☑ Grade level team meetings and staff meetings
- ☑ Classroom observation and feedback
- ☑ Internet-based professional development resources
- ☑ Virtual learning opportunities
- ☑ Professional learning communities

Professional development that is provided through multiple resources and over time is most likely to enable teachers to transfer new practices to their regular teaching. What is important, however, is to ensure that the various professional development opportunities focus on common goals and are derived from assessment data. Different professional development formats may be more or less appropriate to a particular objective. Initial presentation of a new teaching strategy or information can begin in a large group format, followed by site-based or small group work sessions to assist teachers with transferring skills and content they learned to their classrooms. Schools can then bring in experts to provide classroom demonstrations, connected to the core program, or follow-up with grade level meetings at which teachers develop lessons and practice what they learned, embedding their learning into their instruction. A coach may follow up during observation and feedback sessions, focusing on the implementation of the fluency strategies, and the principal incorporates the strategies into walk-throughs during classroom observations.

Once schools gain experience with programs and practices, they should develop their own experts within the building and throughout the district to enable sustained and ongoing professional development and support, thereby

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[13] Torgesen, Houston, Miller, Rissman, & Kosanovich, 2007; Biancarosa & Snow, 2006; Torgesen, Houston, Miller, & Rissman, 2007

institutionalizing the new learning. These "experts" should represent teachers who have implemented their reading programs with fidelity and have been effective in achieving expected outcomes. They can open their classrooms to observations, provide program practice and data review sessions, and model lessons. By developing internal expertise, schools will foster a continuous learning environment for the professionals in the building and assist all teachers to provide high quality reading instruction.

Timing of professional development is also an important consideration. For a novice teacher just beginning the first unit of a core program, it is important to provide professional development that focuses on what must occur, rather than concentrating on skills that appear later. A new first grade teacher who is just beginning to introduce sound blending needs to have support that focuses on how to present those lesson components right away. By providing such "just in time" professional development, the teacher will be less overwhelmed with new learning.[14] This is why when organizing initial instruction on a new core or intervention program, it is practical to focus on the first unit and the critical components of the reading portion of the lesson first.

The summer and beginning of a new school year is a productive time to offer initial professional development on new programs, new reading strategies, and new data systems. Such professional development, grounded in data-based school needs, may include a menu of options that are all focused in a coherent way, but tailored to different grades and educator needs. It can be differentiated by role and experience. For example, at the start of the year, newly hired teachers may need an introduction to their core reading program, while veteran teachers may benefit from a refresher or an advanced professional development experience. The end or beginning of a year also is an opportune time to introduce teachers to a new reading framework and the school's Reading Plan. Whatever occurs before school starts should extend throughout the year through in-service days, in classroom coaching and support, and through grade-level and staff work sessions.

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[14] Gersten and Dimino, 2001

Professional Development Is Differentiated

It is a mistake to assume that all educators at a school need the same professional development. The principal, coaches, classroom teachers and specialists, instructional assistants, new staff members, and even substitutes all require appropriate professional development to be effective implementers of the Reading Plan. While professional development should be differentiated by role, knowledge, and skill, common professional development is also necessary to enable the school staff to collaborate and use a common language throughout the school and district.[15]

Principals

Principals, who must lead their schools to ensure that all students meet summative reading goals, benefit from focused professional development to help them be effective. Their professional development should include the five essential components of reading instruction: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension, a solid understanding of effective delivery methods and practices, deep understanding of the school's assessment system and how to interpret the data, as well as sufficient knowledge about the core, supplemental, and intervention reading programs to be able to effectively observe instruction and monitor fidelity. Principals need support to know how to recognize effective reading instruction, how to provide constructive feedback to individual teachers, and how to manage and direct human and material resources. They also need support to be able to identify school-wide or grade level problems that will require focused professional development. Principals will benefit from district-wide professional development on their programs and assessments, on content-area reading strategies, and on leadership skills. They also benefit from job-embedded professional development, including shadowing external consultants, participating in collegial walk-throughs, and joint debriefing sessions. Observation tools,

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[15] Klinger, 2004

including fidelity monitoring checklists, are vital resources to support the principal's professional learning.

Coaches and Other Mentors

Coaches and other mentors providing ongoing support and in-classroom professional development also need their own training. Because of the vital role coaches play, they may require many hours of professional development and ongoing collaboration with other coaches.[16] Coaches are expected to be experts in the school's reading programs and practices. Therefore, coaches require specialized professional development in understanding the elements of curriculum design, providing effective instructional delivery, giving feedback, conducting observations, demonstrating model lessons, and in understanding the programs and assessments the school will use in order to be successful. Coaches, in fact, have three main roles:

1. supporting the improvement of reading instruction
2. implementing the Reading Framework and the Reading Plan
3. helping teachers use student assessment data to inform instruction

To provide teachers with the support they need, coaches must develop deep understanding of the core, supplemental, and intervention programs, how these address the standards, proven reading instructional practices, high quality instructional delivery, and how best to teach reading during content area instruction. To build their own expertise, coaches must participate in the professional development the teachers receive also. Coaches profit from professional development through "training-of-trainer" work sessions and through apprenticeships with outside consultants who work with coaches in the school setting. In order to become proficient in each grade with a core program, a coach may plan 4-week cycles per grade to learn, practice, demonstrate, and model specific implementation criteria. Effective coaches need to be able to deliver demonstration lessons that serve as strong models of high quality instruction and

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[16] Baker, Smith, Fien, Otterstedt, Katz, Baker, et al., 2007

accurate use of core, supplemental, and intervention programs. Coaches need to understand the principles of strong delivery and be able to model them to demonstrate to others. They must be skillful in pacing, providing corrective feedback, building in sufficient practice, and eliciting active student responses. As part of their professional development, coaches also need to learn how to give structured feedback, how to develop positive teacher-coach relationships, how to overcome resistance, and how to manage their time and differentiate the level and type of support they will provide. Resources for observation and time utilization are important topics to address in the coaches' own professional development.

In addition to the reading program-specific and instructional delivery expertise noted, coaches need a thorough understanding of the Indiana K-6 Reading Framework. Coaches should have knowledge in all six components of the framework, understand formative and summative goals, and be able to guide the school staff as they implement the framework and assess student progress toward the reading goals. Coaches will need a strong working relationship with their building principal so that together they can communicate expectations and maintain a focus on achieving goals and fully implementing the school's Reading Plan. This means coaches need to know how to drive implementation and how to communicate reading performance data to teachers, administrators, and parents focused on improving student progress toward the attainment of reading goals.

Finally, coaches must take the lead with the building principal to ensure that all teachers fully understand how to administer their reading assessments and use the data to make instructional decisions. Coaches should learn how to facilitate data study sessions and problem solve when classrooms, grades, and students are not making sufficient progress. Coaches should also know how to help teachers meet the different needs of high achieving and high ability students either through differentiation and extension or replacing the core curriculum with high ability curriculum. Coaches should participate in training sessions using formative and summative tests to link the findings with decisions about student placement,

grouping, materials, intensity of instruction and decisions about professional development needs within the school.

Teachers

Teachers need sufficient and ongoing professional development. They need to understand the Indiana K-6 Reading Framework and how to implement their core reading programs and interventions effectively. They need to thoroughly know the standards and expected outcomes, and to understand fully the formative and summative goals and the assessments used to determine whether students are meeting them. A comprehensive professional development program for teachers may include all of the following features of reading instruction:

- ☑ active engagement and positive classroom management;
- ☑ the five essential components of reading instruction;
- ☑ assessment purposes and administration processes;
- ☑ assessment use for grouping students, planning instruction, and adjusting and modifying curriculum and instruction;
- ☑ delivery of core, supplemental, and intervention or replacement programs with fidelity using their scope and sequence;
- ☑ establishment of pacing plans and tracking mastery;
- ☑ integration of effective teaching and delivery techniques for application to content-area texts;
- ☑ delivery of effective differentiated instruction for students at risk of reading difficulty or extensions/alternatives for high ability students;
- ☑ data analysis and use

Providing high-quality professional development in all of the above areas is a tall order. Yet too often teachers have either been left on their own to learn new strategies and content, or have been participants in limited professional development experiences that are neither sufficiently detailed nor deep enough to enable the teachers to become truly proficient and feel confident in their instruction. Professional development experiences for teachers can come from many providers:

the SEA, Education Service Centers, the LEA, universities, professional consultants, coaches, principals, and professional organization. Teachers can also access Internet-based sources, take online courses, and attend webinars. For deeper professional development that scaffolds learning and is targeted directly to the classroom, teachers benefit from observation and feedback sessions with a colleague, an external consultant, a coach, or a lead teacher, as well as opportunities to observe model teachers. Collaborative grade level meetings are also excellent vehicles for professional development targeted to the needs of a group of teachers. Time for collaboration is vital, and schools must recognize the usefulness of joint planning and group reflection on an aspect of instructional delivery, collaborative problem solving for groups of students or individuals who are not progressing adequately, and collegial refinement of new program routines. Finally, teachers can also form study groups to review and discuss current research. They can join together to focus on scientific research and learn to discern credible studies from those less credible in order to make instructional decisions based on the best possible evidence available. Many professional resources exist to springboard study groups: Report of the National Research Panel, *Effective Instruction for Adolescent Struggling Readers*, and the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) Practice Guides from the What Works Clearinghouse.[17]

Perhaps the most useful and practical experiences schools can provide their teachers are specific program trainings that are extended over time and include ample opportunities for teachers to practice implementation and get feedback.[18] Such program-specific professional development must include time for teachers to practice presenting routines and lessons to colleagues and then receive constructive feedback from trainers leading the groups. The best program professional development is targeted at the specific grade level components the teacher must use, while ensuring teachers have a broad understanding of all program expectations. For example, an external consultant can meet with specific grade groups over multiple sessions for two to three hours at a time to review

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[17] NRP, 2000; Boardman et al., 2008
[18] Briman, Desimone, Porter, & Garet, 2000; Garet, 2001; Joyce & Showers, 2002

program routines, demonstrate lessons, and observe the teachers instructing. Over the course of several visits, each teacher can see the program taught expertly, practice with colleagues, and then teach the same lesson routine while being observed. In between the external consultant's visits, the site coach continues the cycle of modeling, collegial practice with feedback, and independent practice and application until teachers are confidently implementing their programs with fidelity.

Not all teachers will require the same professional development experiences. Schools must differentiate professional development based on teacher need and student data.[19] A school may want to plan more extensive professional development for teachers who will implement Tier 3 intensive intervention programs, or an individual teacher may be having difficulty teaching the comprehension components of the core program and would benefit from added peer support. The site coach, mentor, and the building administrator are critical resources for planning and organizing professional development that meets teacher needs.

In addition to the certified staff, professional development opportunities are important for instructional assistants, many of whom provide additional small group instruction. Some schools use instructional assistants to provide a double dose of instruction to the students with the greatest needs. Since many instructional assistants have not received formal preservice preparation, it is important for the principal to make thoughtful decisions about their roles. It may be preferable that the most vulnerable learners receive their small group instruction from the most skillful teachers, while instructional assistants provide support to or monitor other students. Regardless of the decision on how instructional assistants are used, they need professional development to be effective, including instruction and practice in the program components they may be expected to use with students.

Finally, two groups of teachers warrant special attention and careful planning: new staff and substitutes. Since schools are likely to have some degree

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[19] Pedigo, 2003; Klingner, 2004

of annual turnover, a professional development plan for new staff as well as substitutes should include an overview of the Indiana K-6 Reading Framework, the purpose and use of expected assessments, standards, the five components of reading, the routines and instructional strategies of the reading programs and materials teachers must use. While schools within a district may experience turnover, new staff training should be a focus of the LEA. In addition, new teachers should have a mentor teacher to provide ongoing support and guidance.

Summary

High quality professional development is an important vehicle to enable all educators at a school to ensure that students achieve reading goals. An effective professional development plan means the school allocates time for professional learning and uses assessment data to plan multidimensional, ongoing, and coordinated professional development that drives deep understanding of reading priorities and proven practices, and results in effective implementation of the school's Reading Plan.